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T E N N E S S E E F O L K L O R E S O C I E T Y

B U L L E T I N

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SPRING CALENDAR*

Tree tops leafing early
Over Little Twin;
Fiddle fern tips curly
Up in Glowrie Glen;
Down in Darksome Hollow
Dogwood's starry light;
Spring has come to follow
Winter out o' sight.

Dandelions growing
All along the creek,
Poke shoots will be showing
In another week.
Hoe cake on the griddle,
Sallet in the pot.
Answer me this riddle;
Is it Spring or not?

Newground patches ready --
Break the rocky rows!
Hold the plowshare steady,
Hurry up the hoes!
Whippoorwill a-warning
Folks on Little Twin
"Plant your corn this morning --
Sprintime's here again!"

Tracy City, Tennessee

MOUNTAIN WIFE

My Tom never took much to outlander ways;
On far-beyant fashions he never spent praise.
All new-fangled notions to him are a sin,
Old Satan's trap bait for the children o' men.

He laughs at my longing for pretty fine things,
Bright bonnets, gay ribbons, store-boughten shoe strings.
A flowered dress in forget-me-not blue,
Like that in the wishbook, page seventy-two.

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But miracles happen, I vow and declare,
As sure as I sit in this old rocking chair.
And you will agree too, I've nary a doubt,
As soon as you know what I'm talking about.

A songcatcher came to our cabin today,
A-seeking old ballads. I sang Lady Gay,
Advice to Fair Maidens, O Nellie, My Dear,
and several others he wanted to hear.

My Tom gave the stranger a wondering look
To see him set down these old songs in a book,
and muttered as iffen his wits were a-daze:
"An' outlander feller has outlander ways."

Here's this I found later, laid up on the shelf:
It's money -- cash money! There -- feel for yourself!
The songcatcher left it, a thank gift, you see,
and sicha surprise -- oh, it nigh addled me!

My Tom totes a text on the end of his tongue:
"A fool and his money will part afore long."
But honey, I'm minded to bid it adieu --
I'm getting that frock in forget-me-not blue!

May Justus

Tracy City, Tennessee

SOME CONTRIBUTIONS OF FOLKLORE STUDIES TO SOCIAL PLANNING

In this very brief discussion the term, folklore studies, is used in a collective sense and covers folkways, mores, ballads, superstitions, and folk thinking.

The folk studies have often been looked upon as "nice" areas of research in which to work, but have often been regarded as comparatively useless by many researchers, and especially by those who have the responsibility of administering action agencies and action programs. These attitudes have been developed largely because the inherent worth of folklore studies and the importance of folkways and mores to the success of action programs have not fully been understood or appreciated.

The mentifactual aspects of culture should be among the "musts" in leadership training. Not only are the structural aspects of custom, folkways, mores, tradition, and superstition important, but the role of each in the social processes and in influencing individual action is highly significant.

We see many action programs fail or fold up, or fall short of what they might accomplish, because the directors of the programs fail to develop an insight into the folklore of the people or because the folkways and mores have been openly violated. Many action programs last as long as an imposed leadership lasts but decline with the withdrawal of the imposed leadership due often largely to the failure to develop a program of local folk leadership. There is danger of imposed planning programs overlooking local leadership, content, and problems that are valuable in the development of any community program. This is due partially to the fact that the planners do not recognize the importance of the folk culture or are too impatient to deal with it, or because significant phases of the local culture are latent, never having been discovered.

In educational planning we now accept with enthusiasm the principle of local adaptation, and in many communities this principle has been rather adequately carried out through local adaptations in the curriculums, in school programs, and in individual studies and activities. Many more possibilities exist in local adaptation of educational programs through the utilization of local history, ballads, stories, and music. Local events

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may enliven and enhance the interest of drama. Superstitions may be effectively used as a point of departure in science courses. Many communities, as, for instance, Negro communities, are rich in folk arts, while the folkways of a people are very significant in vocational training or in the development of programs for community improvement.

Many communities and many people need traditions, a sense of belonging and a sense of importance. Folklore studies may contribute greatly to this sense of cultural integration. Right now, nothing is needed more badly than a sensible interpretation and stock-taking of the folkways and folk attitudes of democracy at both the community and state and national levels.

University of Tennessee

William E. Cole

MY GRANDFATHER'S SPEECH

For a long time I have been telling myself that before too many years pass, I must write down some of the things which I remember about my grandfather's language, for every day, in Chaucer's tales, or John Heywood's interludes, or Shakspeare's and Ben Jonson's plays, or in New England dialect sketches, or in tales from the Appalachian mountains I come across words and and forms of words which were a part of his untaught daily speech. But as I begin, at last, to write from the viewpoint of a student of language, the human elements crowd in to claim their prior rights, and the memories of the old farm and of childhood days come rushing in upon me.

This farm was almost Grandfather's native place, for he was born on the farm adjoining, and, when he was two years old, his parents moved to the place where, from that time on and through all my knowledge of him till his death at the age of eighty-three, he continued to live. The place and the man are inseparable in my thought. In a way seldom known any more in this country, this place was his. In the part of Southern Illinois where Grandfather lived, farms were known by the names of early owners and residents; this farm was known everywhere as the Old-Uncle-Billy-Hunter Place. His tenure of it, his right to it, was to my boyish mind so firm and natural that I can still feel the sense of loss, a sense of the disruption of the very order of things as they had always been, which came upon me as, a few weeks after he died, I stood beside my father and

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heard the raucous, unfeeling blare of the auctioneer as he "cried off" to a stranger those heretofore inviolate acres.

I think I don't want to go back to the old place, for, to my memory, it has beauties and wonders which I fear it would not present now to my more experienced eyes. To the boy it was a very wonderful place. The skyline was a fixed boundary to the little world which I had explored and found large enough and very good. Still, wherever I go, I find myself unconsciously orienting myself to the new place by the memory of those old first-learned landmarks.

East. A field dipped down from the house to a little brook (a "branch" in our speech) and then beyond the branch the field rose again to a line of woods which was the boundary. At the left, there was a rift in the woods just before they joined the northern boundary, a gap, and in this gap the sun rose, except in those midwinter days when it had slipped so far south as to come up behind the trees. I had lived on the place five or six years and was a lad of eleven or so, when I first went through that gap in the woods out into the field beyond. How that field beyond with its flat ordinariness shattered my illusion, for until then I had looked toward that gap as toward mystery, as the men of Odysseus looked toward the Pillars of Hercules.

South. To the South there lay a long level field, The South Field. Its forty acres seemed a vast expanse to me lying flat there and dipping suddenly at the farther end to a narrow valley, the Bottom Field, and so down to the little creek, which could and often did overflow the Bottom Field. Our town was south, five

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miles, and when Father went to town on Saturday, the afternoon after three or four o'clock was one faithful vigil looking out south for his return. Often in the evening light I saw in bush or treetop the buggy top and horse's head I was hoping to see, but, at last there could be no mistake and then for a race out through the orchard to the edge of the South Field to meet him.

West. First of all, a group of magnificent oaks on a hill and, across a valley, the little country road, and then another branch, this one a branch with a name, Panther Branch ("Painter" Branch). Then a lift of the land to a sort of plateau which stretched along the entire western skyline. Out there behind the oaks, what glorious sunsets and, in summer, up from behind them on hot July and August afternoons, what magnificent cloud masses would rise and what splendid thunderstorms!

North. All along Grandfather's place on the north there lay one solid line of woods. "Hill's Pasture" we called it. A forest, if not primeval, at least near enough the primitive to feed full all my boy's imaginings. Of course, there were no longer any wolves and bears and "painters" unless - well, if there were any, they were in Hill's Pasture. But later I conquered this wilderness, for in the fullness of time it came to lie athwart my daily way to school, and I found it a gloriously friendly place. What a wonderful place it was for hazel nuts in the fall, and then, with the snow banks barely gone, what wild flowers to take the winds of March with beauty!

Within these boundaries there lay for me a veritable pleasure world. Out in the West Pasture there was a grove of

sassafras where my young axe, less furtively than a famous axe of legend, first learned the joy of chips. Trees there were eight and nine inches through. Those I let stand, but slenderer ones, three- and four-inch ones, how I thrilled to feel them waver and topple to earth. Out at the western edge of this grove there were six or seven persimmon trees. What a setting for adventure on a crisp November night! A moon, white frost over the earth, sassafras and persimmon trunks and branches silhouetted against the inky sky, perhaps a possum also in silhouette. At least, persimmons, stiff with frost but melting beneath the palate - other flavours in other times perhaps, but theirs how delicious then!

And at the end of a sultry summer's day to take the old lazy buggy horse down to the East Pasture to the creek for a drink, riding bareback, feeling faintly the ripple of muscles beneath his moist glossy sides and shoulders. The shadows thick; coolness in the air now, and dew already forming on the grass. There was one overhanging elm under which I must crouch low on the horse's neck or be brushed off, and as we slid under it, an old owl fluttered and croaked away in slow sleepy flight. The creek at last, and the horse drank, the muscles of his gullet visibly passing the grateful cool water on its way. And when he had enough and began to muddy the water with his forefoot, I turned him and rode at a gallop back through the gathering shadows, glad of the thrill of the gallop; glad to be out of the shadows.

In winter snow lay over everything, and in the snow the footprints of a thousand little field and woods folk. Down by the east branch one Christmas Holiday season, I set up an improvised shack and built a camp fire, and with a Christmas-gift copy of Washington

Irving's Astoria and the easy imagination of twelve years, the pioneers of the great romancer's history were blended so with my own simulated pioneering as to create an altogether convincing illusion.

But as I recall it now, Grandfather was the most remarkable fact about the place for me. When I first knew him, he was sixty-nine, and for the fourteen years following we either lived on the farm with him or were near enough to be frequent visitors. He was a small man, bent even at sixty-nine, with a full beard, brown when I first knew him but rapidly graying. He had attended school only a few months in his boyhood and his reading in those later years, at least, was confined almost solely to the little county newspaper and, on Sundays, to the large-type Bible, the New Testament and Psalms of David bound together. His social life was limited almost solely to attendance on Sunday morning service at the little country church two miles away, and this only in fair weather when he could walk across country. Our insistence that he ride with us and offers of "lifts" from neighbors all met with kindly but steady refusal.

Two or three times a year he would go to town, and on election day he always went and voted the straight ticket. I recall his enthusiasm for Bryan in 1896 and his belief in John P. Altgeldt, the Illinois champion of the plain people, whom Vachel Lindsay celebrated as the "Eagle that is forgotten." Grandfather seemed to me a man of wonderfully even temperament. He loved companionship and yet, when we were not living with him, only my unmarried uncle was with him, and busied as my uncle was most of the

day about the farm, Grandfather was much of the time alone. His wife, my grandmother, died years before my birth, and a daughter, of whose beauty I heard many stories in my childhood, and two sons had all died just on the threshold of maturity.

Most of Grandfather's talk to my sister and me was a sort of gay banter. To us he was a great flatterer, Irish enough to have the magic gift of blarney. When adults were in his company, he said little unless he was directly spoken to. I do not recall a single anecdote from his lips. I must have begged him often for stories of the Mexican War and of the wolves and panthers of his early days, but he always put me off in some evasive way. He never, so far as I can recall, attempted to turn a phrase humorously or to report amusing remarks or stories. As to coarseness or any indication of pleasure in hearing indecent speech from others, he gave not the least indication. Almost never did I hear him speak ill of anyone.

Grandfather was devoutly religious. In the little country church, the old men sat up in the corner to the left from the pulpit. It was, I suppose, an amen corner, except that there were no amens, for it was a Presbyterian church or, to be more exact, it was a Cumberland Presbyterian church. When I went to church with Grandfather, as I did sometimes when Father was away preaching somewhere, I sat beside him in the amen corner. I was afraid to be amused at the indications of his reverence and awe - his generation literally feared the Lord. But I fear I could not have kept my decorum if I had had any contemporary present to share the experience with me. As we sat waiting for the service to begin, an occasional groan came from Grandfather, and at the end of the prayer, a deeper groan. He ~~did~~ not join in the singing; I wonder if he

ever sang! And when church was over, I followed him out and he would stop beside another old man, several years older than himself, and they would groan and sigh - I do not recall that they ever shook hands; this was no casual occasion - and "Well, Will, we aren't long for this world"; and "No, Marshall, it can't be long now."

Always between Sunday School and Church, Grandfather slipped out alone to the burying ground behind the church where his wife and his daughter and two sons lay buried. I used to wish half-fearfully that I might go with him but he never asked me. I think I know that, in spite of what I am sure was a real affection for me, he didn't want me with him then. And I think, too, I know why he insisted on walking back home, in spite of offers of rides from kindly friends - to be alone with his memories, and I can't think now of the many times when I chattered meaninglessly beside him, without regretting that he should have been deprived so often of what might have been a really hallowed Sabbath hour.

He loved his church. Mt. Gilead it was called. He had been brought up in it, and he had brought his own children up in it. My father was its minister for seven years. It was, as I have said, a Cumberland Presbyterian church. Grandfather's maternal grandfather, the Reverend Samuel McAdoo, was one of the three leaders of the movement which resulted in the establishment of that denomination in the first years of the nineteenth century. Four or five years before Grandfather died, the Cumberland church entered into an agreement of union with the church from which a hundred years before it had broken away. Those who know the history of this matter know that numerous local Cumberland Presbyterian churches refused to consider the act of

union as binding upon them and continued to recognize the Cumberland church as existent. The people of old Mt. Gilead church were of this mind.

At that time Father was no longer minister there, but he had gone heartily into the union as had most of the Cumberland ministers of his generation who had had outside contacts and education. And Grandfather was torn between two allegiances. How could he doubt the wisdom of his son to whose judgment he had always deferred; he thought no one wiser - but also how could he go back on his old church? I can see, I think, how inextricably it was bound up in his thinking with the denomination and the denomination with it. I am sure Father never argued the matter with him to the point of urging, but I remember once at the conclusion of what must have seemed to Father an unanswerable presentation of his point of view to the effect that Gilead would still be Gilead with the same history and the same traditions within the united church as without, Grandfather said, "I know, but I don't like to go back on old Gilead." And if not then, at least now I sympathize, for I remember those lonely hurried visits to the graves of his dead after Sunday School, and the groans before the sermon, and the solemn interchanges with Uncle Marshall, and his escape from all the rest to be alone for an hour walking home across the fields, and I am glad now that he didn't go back on old Gilead.

I am inclined to the belief that industry of any continued or sustained sort was never a part of Grandfather's makeup. Of course, in the days of my knowledge of him, his years were excuse for his comparative irresponsibility for set tasks and excuse for his long unoccupied hours. I never saw him harness a horse, and I remember just once that, in an emergency, he drove our buggy horse the five miles from town. But

I remember that secretly we all doubted the practicability of the venture and that it was a nine-days' wonder when he somehow succeeded in doing it. I never saw him use an axe. Doubtless he had handled tools in his earlier days, but as I think of him now, I cannot recall ever having seen hammer, or saw, or hoe, or pitchfork, or any other sort of tool in his hand.

And yet we never felt that he was lazy. His use of leisure was dignified and quiet. If he had boasted about his past achievements or criticised the methods of those who were doing the work, we might have felt a little temptation to resentment, but he passed time so peacefully and peaceably, and was so gratefully appreciative of all that was going on for the general welfare and so full of praise for the skills of others that no one expected him to work. He did have a daily chore. It took him two or three hours each morning. Mother availed herself of it as an opportunity for cleaning Grandfather's room, which was also, as a matter of fact, a sort of general room for the rest of the family in the day time. This chore of his was a walk round the pasture fences, "going round the fences" he called it, for the purpose of making any slight repairs that the cattle or stornas, or whatever it was that doesn't love a fence, had made necessary since the day before.

Sometimes I came upon some of these rather tentative repairs of Grandfather's, and even my boyish inexperience could not restrain a smile over their sketchiness and insecurity. But in this daily chore, Grandfather found buttressing for his self-respect. Before my sister and I grew large enough to preempt the task, Grandfather used always to feed the chickens shelled corn once a day. Otherwise he sat quietly in the path of the passage of the hours, alone with his thoughts hour

after hour, in summer in his cane-seated chair tilted back against a maple in the front yard, and in winter tilted back against the wall beside the sheet-iron stove in the general room.

When I first knew him, Grandfather smoked a pipe, but all at once he quit; no announcement of it, no telling us why. Then, for a few years he chewed tobacco, chewed Horseshoe and Star brands. I liked Horseshoe better than Star, that is I liked the horseshoes better than the stars. But all unannounced and uncommented upon, he quit chewing, too. He never said anything about the effort required to break the habit. Mother thought he became ashamed to have Father buy the tobacco for him. I secretly thought he had seen me too often snooping around the box where he kept it. But I know he did not quit without effort, for I heard him say to a neighbor one day, when he thought none of us was in hearing, that while he was quitting he had stripped the bark from every wild cherry tree on the place to chew as a substitute.

I cannot recall that he was ever ill enough to complain of ill feeling until ten days before he died. And when death came, it took him quietly and swiftly. I haven't, I am sure, conveyed the impression I feel as I have written this. Why should I expect to? To me he was a remarkable person; to you he would have seemed an ordinary, quiet, pleasant-mannered, little old man. His virtues were passive; patience, modesty, self-effacement, loyalty. Others of the circle of my childhood presented me examples of the more active virtues; industry, ambition, adventureusness, but always to me he sits in his old cane-seated chair, tilted back, quietly, modestly, patiently drinking in the quiet evening glow of life with a sweetness and unschooled dignity that I would not forget.

But my purpose was to write down some of the facts I recall about my grandfather's use of the language. It is important as an example of an almost altogether untaught speech, unmodified by extensive reading of the contemporary forms of English. It was, therefore, almost entirely the result of oral tradition, of the handing down of speech from mouth to mouth, from generation to generation, without the standardizing, uniformizing effects of dictionaries and grammars and schoolmasters. As well as I have the facts, the Hunters were north-of-Ireland stock which came to North Carolina in the early eighteenth century. Tory sympathizers in the Revolution, emigrants to Tennessee in the 1790's and to Southern Illinois at the turning of the century, they were the same stock precisely as remained in the coves and valleys of the Appalachians. Small wonder then that their speech should be like that of the untaught mountaineers or like that of the common folk of sixteenth and ~~seventeenth~~ century England and Ireland, among whom were numbered William Shakspeare and Ben Jonson.

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That which follows will be little better than a mere listing of a number of facts of usage, either matters of pronunciation or of vocabulary. Many will be recognized as still persisting in rural sections and many as having had currency in the days of Chaucer and Shakspeare.

I give first some of Grandfather's phrases for estimating quantity or degree. He would speak of "a right smart distance" or "a right smart of a snow," "a heap of rain," or "a heap of people," or "a heap of trouble"; "a sight of weeds in the corn" or "a sight of travel on the road," and "a good chance" or "a right smart chance of fattening hogs." It was "better than five miles" to town and it would be "the matter of

five days" till election day. His neighbor Hill was "rising seventy year old," and Hill's wife was "nigh about sixty."

I never heard him say little. But he had a variant for it: "leettle" which I believe may have taken its rise as a diminutive of little. There was a caution about his use of the word which gave the impression of something very small and very minutely considered. And I remember being told when setting a post with him sighting it for me, to move it "just a leettle grain to the right." When this was done it was pronounced to be "plumb straight," but plumb also could be used to describe other situations, such as "plumb tired" or even "plumb crooked."

As to conditions of health, one was middling, or tollable, or poorly, or hearty, or piert.

A person's height was more likely considered as length. His comments on us as we grew up were on how long we were getting. I never read Chaucer's line about the Squire,

"Of his stature he was of evone length"

without thinking of this locution of my grandfather.

At least one more of his expressions of estimate I recall. "all but." This he used both in emphatic position and also loosely as a sort of afterthought. He would say, "These are all but the best biscuit I ever ate," or "These are too good to eat, all but."

To my knowledge he never cursed or swore, and the only really vigorous expletive he used was "plague on it!" or "the plague!" He never swore, I say, but what I mean is that he never used the recognized formulae of swearing; for his "plague on it!" could and sometimes did take to itself an unction altogether adequate for situations in which others used stronger language.

His speech was not picturesque as much pioneer speech was. It was not elaborate or exaggerated or highly metaphorical like that of Mark Twain's rivermen or Lowell's friends, the Bigelows. As I search back in my memory now, I cannot recall a single proverb from his speech and, simply because he and his immediate ancestors were completely illiterate, not a single allusion to literature either from the classics or the older English Tradition. I do wonder at the absence of Biblical phrasing and cannot account for it except by suggesting his profound respect for all sacred matters - which in his usage took the form of hands-off - and also by suggesting that the almost unbelievable simplicity of his system of life rendered unnecessary any phrasal ornament.

I have just referred to his basic reverence. It manifested itself in his euphemisms. He never spoke of God directly. His phrase was "the Good One" and the Bible was "the Good Book." One of his more or less empty phrases was "Dear knows" or "the Dear One only knows," in which he may not have been fully aware of a euphemism for God. Of his own dead, he practically never spoke, although, as I have indicated, I'm sure he lived much in the unspoken recollection of them. I heard him only a very few times refer to his wife, my grandmother; but always by a pronoun, She or Her, never by her name.

Of the common enemy of man, he spoke only rarely and then in such phrases as "The Old Boy" or "Old Scratch."

The thought of his own lengthening years and approaching death, as I have said before, was an occasion for groans rather than words.

His own reticence in expression of emotions as well as neighborhood customs influenced family designations. His sons, my father included, always called him Pap. I'm sure no other designation would have seemed proper on either side. His most affectionate designation for his

sons was Bully, which he used both as a pet name and also as a general term of praise: "Bully for you" or "Bully for that" or just "Bully!"

Let me note a few characteristic pronunciations. Words ending in o spelled ow tended to take on an er ending: holler, both for a low place or valley and for a loud call; feller, pilller for pillow, winder, widdler, meller, yeller (I think it was never yaller), swaller (both for the bird and the act of gurgitation), shaller, and shadder.

He used the seventeenth century diphthong ai instead of oi in such words as bile, spile, ile, pint for point, and jint, jine, pison.

His accentuation made an emphatic "favorite" out of favorito.

The old once-standard forms ary and nary were his, as were the absolute pronoun forms hisn, horn, youarn, ourn, and theirn.

The first vowel in the words narrow, arrow, and sparrow was much broader in his speech than in the form now current and gave "n^harra," "arra," and "sp^harra."

The nasal consonant in length and strength was an n and the result was "len'th" and "stren'th."

Further was "furder" and corner was "cornder." And I remember the rather rare plural form "mild" in such a phrase as "it was a full mild acrost the country."

I think often of the way he had of taking a word ending in an obscure a sound such as sofa or china. It was always "sofy," "chiny," "idy" for idea, and in women's names, even such names as Ada, Cora, Ida, Dora, it was "Ady," "Cory," "Idy," "Dory," until, as I think back on it now, I feel it may have been a sort of modest hesitancy on the threshold of what may have been felt to be a refinement of speech to be reserved for more literate levels.

On the farm much speech centered around the animals. Grandfather's generic term for them was "critter" or "dumb critters." He used the redundant "cow brute" freely and "horse brute" very rarely. A "critter" that was disrespectful of fences was "a breachy critter." A difficult animal was "fractious" or "cross-grained" or "ill."

cf. Lady Macbeth's description of her husband as one who would be great but was

without the illness should attend it

and you should have this old flavor of the last-named word.

Wild animals were "varmints" - minks, polecats, woodchucks, and the like - and one recognizes the kinship of the word to vermin and perhaps remembers the young rascal in "The Pardoner's Tale" who told the apothecary he wanted poison to get revenge on the polecat in his hedge and the vermin which troubled him at night.

Grandfather never had a timepiece in the house until we went to live there. There was a notch cut on the door sill of the south door by which in its relation to the progress of the shadows he told the time. His language was supplied with phrases which reflected this fact. Time was before or at or after "sun-up"; and in the late afternoon he would speak of "an hour by sun" as an hour before sunset.

I think he was not superstitious, but he was well stored with weather lore, and he watched closely the direction and the shifting of the wind. I remember one phrase which we all admitted we never understood but which we never questioned him about. He would come in from outside and remark, "Well, the wind's getting around. It will rain tomorrow." We never knew quite what the wind's getting around meant, but it usually rained when he said it would.

A spring flood was a "freshet" or a "fresh" and a raging creek ("crick" to him) was said to be "on a fresh."

He did not say remember; he said "I mind" or "I recollèc'."

A brief time was "a spell." "Stop and set for a spell," he would invite one. Or he spoke of "a spell of wet weather" or "a dry spell."

One ate a "snack" when a hasty lunch was taken or he would speak of "a bait of victuals" or "a bait of supper," or mone might "bait" his horses or give them "a bait of hay."

Cholerie or reserved behaviour he described as "grumness." Such a person was "grum." A rash unconsidered act was "brashness" and an overconfident youngster was "brash.", "Ciphering" was a word for calculating or computing but also for any act of deliberation or decision: one might be "ciphering out a plan for cloaning a piece of land." A "rig" was a vehicle, and in his experience the finest rig was a buggy.

He had surprising health all his life and so had little occasion to speak of diseases. I do recall his forms for "rheumatiz," "cholery," and "asthmy."

A hostile encounter or skirmish was a "brush" - the old dog coming in with his coat torn and tousled seemed to have had "a brush with some varmint." A common word for throw was "to chunk." This was used particularly to describe the throwing of stones or sticks to scare a rabbit out of a stump or brush pile. One "chunked him out" or "chunked rocks at him."

Unprecedented or unusual happenings were said "to beat all." "That does beat all."

And his verb forms for the strong verbs agreed with no modern grammar, though if one goes far enough back and far enough afield in

the dialects of English, one can find every one of them on record. The parts of see were either see, see, seen or seed or see, seen or seed, seen or seed, 'br otherwise. Come did not change in the past tense and past participle; it was come, come, come, and clumb, driv, writ, and hoerd were common past tense forms.

I must record also his very interesting idiom with fetch. One who was frightened, he would say, "fetched a leap" or "fetched a yell," or "fetched a whoop," and another similar idiom for one who called out was "raised a holler" or "a whoop."

A well-disposed or liberal or friendly person was "clever" or "clever turned." But also an ingenious or skilled person was "clever." Movable possessions or household goods were "plunder." Women were "women-folks" and a man's wife was his "woman." "You and your woman come over and spend the day." Arriving guests were bidden, "Light," an interesting reminder of days, the days of his young manhood, when everyone rode horseback.

But this must suffice. To you this may not even be an interesting record. Its general interest, such as it has, is in its reflection of a habit of speech, one of the strata in the accumulating deposite of the phenomena which taken together we call English. To me it is that and more, an interest in a remarkably unremarkable old man who lived all his life, except for a few months spent in Zachary Taylor's army, far from the active current of events; who never saw an electric light or an automobile; who got his mail much less frequently than once a week and when it came it was only the county newspaper; who never thought in terms of a city, although St. Louis was only fifty miles away; who was never on a train but once in his life and then for only a four-mile trip; who never read a page of a play or a novel or a poem,

except those in the Bible; and yet was an amiable, cheerful, healthy man until past three-score and ten. His language, lacking imagination and picturesqueness, lacked also coarseness and violence, and spoke out of a simple and even life such as our hurried complex system of living can not match and can scarcely imagine.

Maryville College

Edwin R. Hunter

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TENNESSEE FOLKLORE SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Dean Hunter

We wish to express to Dean Edwin R. Hunter our sincere appreciation for his excellent leadership and direction of the Tennessee Folklore Society as Secretary and Editor of the Bulletin. We know that he will continue to be one of our leaders, and we hope that, after a well deserved relief from his duties as an officer, he will again accept the work that he has performed so well. His loss as our editor is partly compensated by the fact that we have gained him as a contributor, and we have in this issue his excellent article which he would not publish while he was editor.

God Bless the Devil, Liar's Bench Tales

God Bless the Devil, Liar's Bench Tales. Edited by James R. Aswell and others of the Tennessee Writers' Project. Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1940. \$2.00.

Our readers who have not seen God Bless the Devil will be interested in the following quotation from the jacket of the book.

"At the Liars' Bench you will hear of Shep Goins, the Melungeon fool killer, and of the dark and violent Melungeons themselves, and of Big Betsy Mullins, the

Melungeon 'She-Queen of the Moonshiners.' There are tales of Bull Runnels, the giant blacksmith of Middle Tennessee who had never had a dream - of Ishon Golightly slain by the Lord's lightning to keep him from eating himself to death - of Tubal Creasy and his Double Trouble - of Mammy Wise of the second sight who could 'sooth up anything' - of Brother Billy, mighty vessel of the Lord - of Cousin Freebody's last prayer and its confounding answer. Then, there are yarns about Old Hulett Crossway and how he dealt with the Machine Age - Little Eight John, the never-minding boy - Adam and Eve and the two keys - Big Luster who killed the Devil and made Reelfoot Lake - the real reason why the big snakes migrated from Tennessee - Pretty Baby, the ketch-dog went to Glory - and Cap Shankle, the He-Coon of Muscaline Ridge.

"These are a few of the extravagant yarns current at the Liars' Bench. In type they range from wild whoppers to stories based on actual persons and events that each successive teller has garnished with fancies of his own. 'And if I ain't spoke the Gospel truth,' they say at the Liars' Bench, 'may God bless the Devil.'

"These stories are widely circulated in Tennessee. They have been selected from dozens remembered and written down by staff members of the Tennessee Writers' Project. A great many of them are versions heard in Tennessee alone."

The staff member of the Tennessee Writers' Project who remembered and wrote down each story is given, but the person who told the story to the staff member is not given, and the tales are not located any more definitely than that they come from Tennessee.

South Carolina Folk Tales

South Carolina Folk Tales. Foreword by Reed Smith, preface by Mabel Montgomery. Compiled by Workers of the Writers' Program of the Work Projects Administration. Columbia, S. C., University of South Carolina, 1941.

South Carolina Folk Tales is an excellent collection of interest to the general reader and well documented for the student of folklore. An extensive bibliography and cross references make the book admirable material for a study of the folk tale. It is a model of how such work should be done.

Many of the animal stories and the other tales were taken from the Negroes of the South Carolina coast, and the reader will enjoy new and old stories about Buddah Rabbit and Buddah Fox.

Folklore Institute

The Indiana University Summer Institute of Folklore will be held at Bloomington, Indiana, from June 29 to August 22, 1942. The following outstanding authorities will conduct courses, lead discussions, and present folklore by means of campus folk-sings, displays of folk-art, and short plays based upon folk themes: Stith Thompson, Ralph Steele Boggs, Charles F. Voegelin, Harold Whitehall, Alan Lomax, John Jacob Niles, Herbert Halpert, George Herzog, Harold W. Thompson, and Erminie W. Voegelin. The wide variety of activities in the Institute will be directed towards the interests and needs of several groups: (a) regular university students, (b) practical folklore collectors, (c) the general public, and (d) the folklore specialists themselves. One may take the various courses for full academic credit, or may audit all or any part of a course for his profit and pleasure. All inquiries concerning the Institute can be addressed to the Director, Professor Stith Thompson, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Western Folklore Conference - July 9-10-11, 1942

Sponsored by the University of Denver
Denver, Colorado

For Students, Teachers, Artists, Authors, and Research Scholars

The University of Denver will again welcome to its campus all those interested in the collection, preservation, study, dissemination, and artistic use of American folklore. The materials to be considered include frontier songs and ballads, folk tales, western vocabularies, common sayings, historical traditions, legendary characters, Indian myths and legends, customs, popular beliefs and folk dances.

An outstanding member of the staff will be Dr. Alton C. Morris, President of the Southeastern Folklore Society and editor of the Southern Folklore Quarterly.

All those who wish to take part in the conference or who wish to receive the program as soon as it is printed, should notify the director, Dr. Levette J. Davidson, University of Denver.